

# Frequently Asked Question for Travel Management Planning on the Tonto National Forest

## **1. How will I know what roads I can use or which ones are closed?**

After the EIS is completed with a signed Record of Decision, the new rule will be implemented which designates a system of roads, trails and areas that the public must travel on. A free Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) will be available to the public which displays the National Forest System (NFS) routes, NFS trails, and the areas on NFS lands that are designated for motorized vehicle use. The map also identifies the types of vehicles that are allowed on each route and in each area and any seasonal restrictions that apply. Other public roads will be shown for information purposes only.

## **2. How far can I park off a designated route?**

You may park a motor vehicle on the side of the road when it is safe to do so without causing damage to National Forest Service resources or facilities, unless prohibited by state law, a traffic sign, or an order. Parking is allowed within a specified distance of up to 30 feet, from the edge of the road surface.

## **3. How does this affect Motorized Big Game Retrieval (MBGR)?**

The draft decision will allow motor vehicle use up to one mile on both sides of designated roads and motorized trails, solely for retrieving legally harvested elk and bear. No motorized access is permitted in designated wilderness areas and other areas where OHV use is restricted.

## **4. How does this impact other activities like firewood gathering and mushrooming?**

The draft decision will allow for the collection of personal use fuelwood for persons with permits within designated woodcutting areas.

The collection of most forest products such as firewood and pinyon nuts is usually done with just one passage of a vehicle to the collection site and back to the access road. Collection of forest products such as firewood usually does not result in the complete removal of vegetative material from the ground surface, or in rutting that would leave a more persistent track.

## **5. How does this impact dispersed camping?**

The draft decision designates motor vehicle use on 91 miles of full-sized motorized trails, providing access to nearly 2,800 existing dispersed camping sites.

## **6. How many comments were received?**

The Tonto National Forest has received over 500 comments since it began travel management in 2009. During the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, 2,500 letters were received, the majority being form letters generated by interest groups. There were 85 unique submissions.

**7. I've heard that the Cherry Creek Road will be closed? Why?**

The Cherry Creek Road (FSR 203) east of State Route 288 is partially within the Sierra Ancha Wilderness designated boundary. The Wilderness Act does not permit motorized travel in designated wilderness. South of Devil's Canyon, and north of PB Springs will be barricaded prohibiting motorized travel.

**8. I heard that the Powerline Road will be closed. Why?**

A portion of the Powerline Road (FSR 393) is within the designated Maztazal Wilderness boundary. The Wilderness Act does not permit motorized travel in designated wilderness. FSR 393 is northeast of Bartlett Lake. Less than one mile near Alder Springs will be physically blocked, prohibiting motor vehicle use.

**9. Will the road to Aztec Peak be closed? Why**

The Road to Aztec Peak (FSR 487) will be closed where it enters the Sierra Ancha Wilderness. The road will be gated, prohibiting motorized access for the general public. The route provides the only access to the Murphy Ranch. The landowners will be authorized access to their private property via FSR 487. Federal law permits access to private land within federal boundaries.

**10. Where will I be able to drive my vehicle in Payson and Pleasant Valley?**

The Final Travel Management Rule, established in 2005, prohibits cross-country travel. You will no longer be able to travel off of designated roads and motorized trails unless:

- You have a fuelwood cutting permit and are within a designated fuelwood area, or
- You are retrieving a legally harvested elk or bear.

**11. Does this decision allow for additional ingress and egress for towns and private property surrounded by the Forest?**

This type of access was not addressed in travel management planning for the Tonto National Forest. Ingress and egress for private property will be addressed by ranger district in the future as necessary.